

**การวิจัยเชิงพรรณนา-การสำรวจนโยบายและแนวทางการปฏิบัติ
ในการสรรหาและคัดเลือกบุคลากรขององค์กรข้ามชาติในประเทศไทย**
**A Descriptive Survey of Recruitment and Selection Policies and
Practices among Multi-national Organizations in Thailand**

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บทคัดย่อ

รายงานการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณฉบับนี้ เป็นการสำรวจนโยบายและแนวทางการปฏิบัติในการสรรหาและคัดเลือกบุคลากร ในตำแหน่งผู้บริหารขององค์กรภาคเอกชนในประเทศไทย จำนวน 30 องค์กร โดยแบบสอบถามจำนวน 259 ชุดได้ถูกส่งไปยังบริษัทใน 4 กลุ่มประเภทธุรกิจที่ได้ผ่านการคัดเลือกแล้ว ซึ่งประกอบด้วย 1.) ผู้ส่งออก ตัวแทนจำหน่าย บริษัทร่วมทุน และ/หรือผู้ผลิตสินค้าประเภทอุปโภคบริโภคต่างๆ 2.) บริษัทโฆษณา 3.) บริษัทที่ปรึกษาทางธุรกิจและบริษัทจัดหางาน และ 4.) องค์กรด้านค้าปลีก-ค้าส่ง รวมทั้งบริษัทค้าปลีกที่เกี่ยวกับอาหาร ผลจากการสำรวจระบุว่า ความต้องการในด้าน การตรวจสอบถึงคุณสมบัติของผู้สมัครงานในตำแหน่งผู้บริหารขององค์กรภาคเอกชน จากผู้รับรองการสมัครงานและผู้บังคับบัญชาในสายงานที่ผ่านมานั้นมีแนวโน้มลดลง และยิ่งไปกว่านั้น องค์กรข้ามชาติยังไม่ให้ความสำคัญมากนัก กับการใช้แบบทดสอบเชิงจิตวิทยา (เช่นแบบทดสอบบุคลิกภาพ แบบทดสอบทางด้านศักยภาพและความสามารถในการเรียนรู้) แบบทดสอบไหวพริบและปัญญา และการใช้ศูนย์ทดสอบความสามารถ (เช่นผู้สมัครจะถูกกำหนดให้มีส่วนร่วม อยู่ในสถานการณ์ที่จะต้องปฏิบัติงานจริงและจะถูก

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ประเมินผลการทดสอบ) โดยมีการนำมาใช้น้อยมากในประเทศไทย ถึงแม้ว่าองค์กรข้ามชาติที่มีขนาดใหญ่ ซึ่งมีพนักงานมากกว่า 1,000 คนขึ้นไป จะมีแนวโน้มการใช้แบบทดสอบเชิงจิตวิทยา แบบทดสอบไหวพริบและปัญญา และการใช้ศูนย์ทดสอบความสามารถ มากขึ้นก็ตาม และผลจากการสำรวจยังระบุอีกว่า องค์กรภาคเอกชนที่มีขนาดใหญ่ มีแนวโน้มที่จะมีผู้สัมภาษณ์มากกว่า 1 คนขึ้นไปในแต่ละครั้ง (เช่นสัมภาษณ์ตั้งแต่สองคนขึ้นไป หรือเป็นกลุ่ม) และการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อการรับสมัครและ คัดเลือกบุคลากร ในตำแหน่งผู้บริหาร มักจะมีรูปแบบและแนวคำถามในการสัมภาษณ์ที่แน่นอน (ทั้งรูปแบบและแนวคำถามในการสัมภาษณ์ที่ชัดเจนและละเอียด โดยผู้สัมภาษณ์จะต้องปฏิบัติตามอย่างเคร่งครัด และรูปแบบแนวคำถามแบบ บางส่วนโดยนำมาใช้เป็นแนวทางในการสัมภาษณ์) ซึ่งสิ่งนี้สามารถอธิบายได้ด้วยความจริงที่ว่า การสัมภาษณ์โดยมีผู้สัมภาษณ์มากกว่า 1 คนนั้น สำหรับองค์กรใหญ่มีข้อได้เปรียบหลายประการ เมื่อเปรียบเทียบกับ การสัมภาษณ์ที่ใช้ผู้สัมภาษณ์เพียงคนเดียว โดยจะมีข้อได้เปรียบทั้งในเรื่องของความมีเหตุมีผล เนื่องจากเป็นข้อมูลที่รวบรวมมาจากหลายคน มีการตัดสินใจที่ได้รับการยอมรับมากกว่า และตัดสินใจได้รวดเร็วกว่า โดยที่รูปแบบคำถามในการสัมภาษณ์ที่ละเอียดและชัดเจนนั้น มีแนวโน้มที่จะให้ความสม่ำเสมอและแน่นอนแก่การประเมินผู้สมัครงานในตำแหน่งผู้บริหาร รวมถึงยังสามารถให้ข้อมูลที่จำเป็นสำหรับการตัดสินใจอีกด้วย และเมื่อเปรียบเทียบกับองค์กรภาคเอกชนขนาดใหญ่ ผลจากการสำรวจระบุว่า องค์กรภาคเอกชน ขนาดเล็ก (ซึ่งมีพนักงานน้อยกว่า 200 คน) และองค์กรภาคเอกชนขนาดกลาง (ซึ่งมีพนักงานมากกว่า 200 คนแต่ไม่ถึง 1,000 คน) มีแนวโน้มที่จะมีการสัมภาษณ์มากกว่า 1 ครั้ง สำหรับการรับสมัครและคัดเลือกบุคลากร ในตำแหน่งผู้บริหาร

Abstract

This research is a quantitative survey of the recruitment and selection policies and practices among 30 multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector. Two hundred and fifty-nine questionnaires were sent to 30 selected companies which are categorized into four types of firms. These include 1) importers, distributors, joint ventures and/or manufacturers in various types of consumer product categories,

2) advertising agencies, 3) business consultants and recruitment agencies, and 4) organizations in retail and the wholesale trade industry (including retail food companies). The major findings reveal that there seems to be a decrease in the requirement for reference checking or use of previous supervisor's reports for managerial positions. The results also show that multi-national organizations are less likely to rely on psychological procedures for the vacancy of managerial level and assessment centers are still of little use in Thailand. Although some of the larger multi-national organizations are moving towards increased reliance on the psychological tests, intelligence tests and assessment centers, the trend is still too small to be indicative of future practice in Thailand. Research findings also indicate that larger organizations tend to favor panel and structured (both partially and highly structured) interviews. This could be explained by the fact that panel interviews tend to provide larger organizations with several significant advantages over traditional one-to-one interviews, including higher validity, because of multiple inputs, better acceptance of the decision, and faster decision time. Structured interviews, on the other hand, tend to provide a more consistent basis for evaluating managerial candidates and are more likely to provide the type of information needed for making sound decisions; however, larger organizations are less likely to conduct more than one interview with managerial applicants, compared to small and medium size organizations.

Introduction

In many organizations in Thailand, regardless of their size and complexity, the human resource professional now plays as important a role as his or her counterpart in the areas of marketing, finance and production in influencing corporate performance. An increasing awareness of the critical role of human resource management and the need for a productive and efficient organizational environment have led to a significant increase in the activities

and occupational status of human resource professionals and business practitioners. As a consequence, human resource management and business functions have attracted more talented and highly qualified people who are multi-skilled and are able to perform a range of different and demanding tasks. Although managerial employees and human resource professionals have begun to play a new strategic role in defining and shaping the form of the employment relationship, there is still little systematic research on human resource management philosophy and practices in Thailand. As such, the level of empirical research information that exists about managerial employees, human resource professionals and their organizations is inadequate and therefore not matched by a corresponding body of knowledge about the functions and responsibilities of the human management resource area. The purpose of this research is, therefore, to provide general information to improve our understanding of current practices on recruitment and selection in multi-national organizations through a small-scale survey of 30 Bangkok-based organizations in the private sector.

Review of Literature on Recruitment and Selection

In Thailand, attention during the early 2000s was paid to the development of human resource strategies and policies, which served to promote the achievement of organizational objectives. However, numerous studies indicate that much organizational life and interaction is not directly related to the achievement of organizational objectives. This discrepancy between formal objectives and behavior derives from a number of sources, including the meanings people bring to organizational life (Silverman, 1979: 141), the operation of coalitions of competing groups often with interests different from those of stated organizational objectives, (Dalton 1950, 1959; Pettigrew 1973; Gowler and Legge 1975), the competing social interests and power relations of groups in the social structure (Salaman 1981; Purcell and Ahlstrand, 1994), the nature of the process of decision-making which is sometimes not a rational exercise

of wisdom, judgment or expertise but one in which managers act out of habit or instinct (Marshall and Stewart, 1981: 274; Anthony, 1977: 62; Wrinkler, 1974: 210; Simon, 1960: 28). Further, the nature of the implementation of policy involves the creation and maintenance of informal, social networks based on doing favors, nurturing professional reputations and controlling resources and information (Kotter, 1996: 69-70).

From the literature review, this suggests that even if a strategic recruitment and selection may have initially been initiated and explored in an organization, in practice organizational dynamics might have limited its application. There are many obvious reasons why many organizations fail to develop and implement strategic approaches to recruitment and selection. One of the conventional beliefs is that if line managers are not involved in setting objectives and strategies, the plans may then not be effectively implemented. In addition, the development of planning systems in many organizations, which are typically bottomed up, requires the involvement of too many people from different departments and levels in the entire organization. To make the concept work, what is critical is an understanding of the fit with the level of environmental turbulence, whether the culture of the organization could tolerate such an approach, and the fact that commitment alone is not enough to implement strategy.

It is true that responsibility for the implementation of strategy lies with senior management executive and line managers, but it is vital that HR professionals play a much larger and strategic role. To be more precise, HR professionals should play both a leadership and a support role when strategies require fundamental change, but the focus should be placed more on a support role when the strategies lead only to incremental change. More importantly, Hussey attempts to argue — and I tend to agree with him — that senior HR professionals should be in a position to play a part as members of the senior management team in initiating and developing overall plans and have the duty to ensure that the plans of the human resource function are set up to

deal with the right problems (Hussey, 2002: 30-36). It is true that many of the issues in organizations related to people should be reserved for human resource management and that line managers have nothing to do with these issues; it is fundamental, however, that HR professionals play a critical role in strategic decision processes.

In many Thai business organizations, human resource management policies and practices develop on an *ad hoc* basis, with little integration of the organization's future needs. Often human resource policies and strategies are developed to solve an immediate problem, with no strategic thought to their long-term implications. Such policies and practices lock the organizations into inflexible modes of operation, leaving them unable to see that other strategies might be more appropriate. The literature and empirical studies on the adoption of the strategic approach to recruitment and selection within Thai multinational organizations in private sectors have been very minimal and also limited in terms of the scope of their studies.

Research provides insight into the issues of strategic recruitment and selection, and gives an impression of interest in these approaches and the extent to which they are executed and implemented. In addition, it provides evidence that is useful in shaping perceptions of the general state of affairs and stimulates thought and conceptual development surrounding the issues of strategic human resource management. In this section, some of important research findings on the subject of strategic recruitment and selection will therefore be elucidated.

Strategic Recruitment and Selection

A selection is said to be strategic if it is informed by the organization's environment, is linked to strategy, is socially responsible and valid, and is periodically evaluated and maintained by knowledge of leading theory and practice (Lundy and Cowling, 1996: 240). In this section, we will therefore discuss the concept of strategic selection, which is based on the premise that selection issues should form part of strategic thinking within an organization

at both the formulation and implementation stages. Although there are many studies that describe what organizations should do to accomplish strategic human resource management, there are very few that describe how to do this (Kydd and Oppenheim, 1990). This deficiency also applies to the areas of strategic selection. Below is a summary of cases in multi-national organizations which helps to demonstrate strategic selection in action.

Kydd and Oppenheim in 1990 studied four large U.S. organizations with the objective of determining how they linked their strategic direction to the planning of their human resources. In all four organizations studied, it was found that the educational and training requirements that further defined the labor pool for each organization were those that were important to keep the company on the leading edge of the competition. In an organization which had a stable and predictable environment in terms of known products, known competitors and widely acknowledged factors for success, the focus was placed on the selection of the brightest managerial employees with the best MBA qualifications and sound experience. On the other hand, a group of technological businesses in which technical excellence is critical to remaining competitive stressed long-term innovation and quality. These organizations required highly and specifically trained employees of which there was a limited pool. The recruitment and selection was thus geared specifically toward people with technical skills and commitment to their work area which, it was believed, would improve role performance over time. The findings offer a number of important insights, including the idea that human resource managers must cope with the special human resource needs of their organizations and that these are by and large determined by the environment within which they operate and the strategic directives established to deal with the environment. Kydd and Oppenheim have argued that the level of environmental turbulence that an organization must face, and the extent to which its key competitive thrust is to be an innovator, will determine the approach which will be taken to human resource management issues. High turbulence organizations would be more concerned with 'means'; that is, high turbulence precludes evaluation

solely on the 'end' result because of difficulty with prediction. It is thus advised that such organizations should select managerial employees on the basis of their ability to respond quickly and appropriately to dynamic conditions rather than on the basis of meeting static predefined objectives. To be more specific, managerial employees that will fill positions in such an organization, which relies on an innovation strategy, should have an awareness of the contextual factors surrounding the specific position in order to be able to perform the duties of the positions. The individual must monitor a wide set of variables. The job is less focused and performance will be linked to the long-term contribution to the organization's innovation strategy. It can then be concluded that in these large four organizations, the concern for strategic selection led them to define their specific labor markets and identify what it took, in terms of educational and training requirements, to maintain a leading edge within the wider context of their competitive environment (Lundy and Cowling, 1997: 212-215).

Another important study, which describes the use of strategic selection as one of a number of human resource management responses to radical strategic change within the context of dynamic environmental forces, is that of Sparrow and Pettigrew in 1988. In response to a more competitive and consumer-orientated marketplace, a strategically managed human resource function within an organization, especially regarding strategic selection, is a critical part of making a business successful. Their research findings confirmed that there has been identification of a need for more general processes as opposed to technical skills. The managers are searching for general attributes in the managerial employee that indicate ability to cope with change, such as leadership, entrepreneurship, project management, tolerance of uncertainty, management skills and communication ability. This study of ten companies in the UK computer industry indicated that recruitment is one of the most important human resource management activities and should therefore be central to corporate strategy rather than hived off into a separate personnel ghetto (Lundy and Cowling, 1997: 215-216).

One additional study, which provides strong research evidence of a selection and strategy link, is that of Hendry, Pettigrew and Sparrow in 1988. They found that those organizations that have made developments in their human resource management process have done so under competitive pressure. They in particular argued that a complex set of business environment changes have resulted in generic strategic responses. They identified seven interdependent responses that have driven and dictated developments in human resource management, including competitive restructuring, decentralization, internationalization, acquisition and mergers, total quality processes, technological change, and new concepts of service management. They also found evidence that such changes created needs among the organizations for new operating structures and systems, and new skills, knowledge and capability from employees at many organizational levels (Lundy and Cowling, 1997:216-218). Alongside business strategy, strategic selection is therefore crucial in creating and retaining new skills among employees in many organizations, and such selection which supports strategic human resource management should be formulated and implemented under different competitive environments.

Research Methodology

The unit of analysis consists of four types of Bangkok-based business organizations with separate, dedicated human resource departments which serve as representatives of multi-national organizations in the private sector in their respective industries. This includes 1) importers, distributors, joint ventures and/or manufacturers of various types of consumer product categories, 2) advertising agencies, 3) business consultants and recruitment agencies, and 4) organizations in the retail and wholesale trade industry (including retail food companies). The population studied will be from four types of firms and 259 questionnaires (from 30 selected companies) will be sent to private business organizations in the Bangkok areas. The number two hundred and fifty nine was arbitrarily set; the primary concern was the limitation of resources and

time. The data will be obtained from a small-scale survey of 30 Bangkok-based organizations in the private sector which will be chosen from American, Australian, British and European chambers of commerce as well as embassies of Western countries in Bangkok. The aim of this questionnaire survey is to obtain information on the current practices of recruitment and selection among large, multi-national organization in the Thai private sector.

There are two major sections, with twenty-nine questions in this questionnaire. The first section contains 13 questions about the general characteristics of the sample. This basically includes employee's personal and career information, educational background as well as a basic description of the sampled organizations, such as the type, size and design configuration of the organizations. The second section contains 16 questions relating to the methods and procedures used to assess external applicants for managerial positions in the sampled organizations. The individual respondent is asked to indicate, from suggested estimates ranging from 0 to 100 percent, the approximate percentage of occasions on which he or she (each individual organization) would use methods and procedures with external managerial applicants before deciding whether to appoint or reject them. There are five response categories including Never Use (0%), Rarely (25%), Sometimes (50%), Usually (75%), and Always Use (100%).

Once verbal and written approvals have been obtained from senior management executives (managing directors, or human resources directors) of the sampled organizations, lists of middle management employees (including HR managers/directors and specialists) will be determined for the distribution of questionnaires. To complete the questionnaires, these selected groups of employees will be those responsible for development and implementation of business strategies and human resource policies in their business units/departments in the organizations. Selected middle management employees must have more than one full year of work experience with their present employers and must have direct subordinates (with the exception of HR specialists) reporting to them. The investigation will then be carried out through a hand-

delivered and structured questionnaire distributed to 30 private business firms in Bangkok.

Limitations of the Study

In order to minimize some limitations associated with this survey, more sample sizes are necessary as this would help the researcher to conduct more comprehensive quantitative fieldwork on the subject. More importantly, it should therefore be noted that the respondents were selected non-randomly from 30 private business firms in Bangkok, thus limiting the generalizeability of the research findings.

Research Findings and Discussion

This section deals specifically with the descriptive analysis and interpretation of 30 randomly chosen organizations in Bangkok, which include 29 multi-national organizations operating in different industries in the private sector and one Thai multi-national organization. Through the use of structured questionnaires, we will be able to learn about the current practices and systems of management recruitment and selection in multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector. A total of 259 questionnaires were distributed to 30 sampled organizations and a total of 188 questionnaires were returned, which represents an overall response rate of 72.59%. Many scholars agree that a response rate of 70 percent is very good, especially for analysis and reporting (Babbie, 1986: 221; Rea and Parker, 1992: 85; Mangione, 1995: 60-61; Edwards, Thomas, et al., 1997: 92; and Zikmund, 1989: 225). After the distribution of these 259 structured questionnaires to the sampled organizations, the researcher had to make telephone calls to each individual senior manager to follow up and make necessary arrangements for the completion and return of all questionnaires. Together with the telephone calls to all senior managers, the researcher, on many occasions, had to personally follow up by visiting them individually to ensure that these senior managers clearly understood the key criteria for selecting qualified employees for distribution of all questionnaires.

All questionnaires were directly sent (hand-delivered) to senior management executives, which included managing directors, general managers or human resource directors of the sampled organizations. These senior management executives then determined the list of managerial employees and human resources specialists within their companies for further re-distribution of questionnaires. Out of 188 returned questionnaires, 145 were successfully completed and usable, or 55.98%, which could then be considered as quite an acceptable rate of response according to survey research standards. The response rate from each type of organization is summarized in table 1:

Table 1: Number of Questionnaire Distributions and Response Rate from Different Organizations

Types of Organizations	Number of Organizations	Distributed	Responded and Usable	Response Rate
Organizations in the Retail and Wholesale Trade Industry	6	51	17	33%
Business Consultants & Recruitment Agencies	4	17	14	82%
Importers, Distributors, Joint Ventures and Manufacturers	16	148	96	65%
Advertising Agencies	4	43	18	42%
Total	30	259	145	56%

General Characteristics of the Sample

Out of 145 respondents, 49.7% are male while 50.3% are female (See Table 2). This could imply that more females are entering the Thai labor force and being accepted more into senior managerial and human resource positions in multi-national organizations in the private sector. According to the survey results, the majority of the respondents are married people (56.6%) while 41.4% are single and 2.1% are divorced (See Table 3).

Table 2 : Sex Distribution of the Respondents

Sex	Number	Percent
Male	72	49.7
Female	73	50.3
Total	145	100

Table 3 : Marital Status Distribution of the Respondents

Marital Status	Number	Percent
Single	60	41.4
Married	82	56.6
Divorced	3	2.1
Total	145	100

About two thirds (62.6%) of the respondents are between 31 and 40 years of age, and by and large this would represent a typical range of age for supervisory/managerial and human resource professionals in large multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector. Classification of the respondents by age distribution indicated that the largest number of respondents are in the 31-35 year age group, which represented 35.8%. About 26.8% are in the 36-40 year age group, and 13.1% are in the 41-45 year age group. Only 5.6% are older than 46 years, while the younger group (less than 30 years of age) accounts for 18.7% (See Table 4).

Concerning the level of education of the respondents, the survey shows that the majority of employees who completed the questionnaires are university-educated people, as it shows that 86.2% have bachelor degrees and higher (See Table 5). While 9.0% of the respondents possess associate diplomas, only 4.8% have high school certificates. In terms of the discipline area of graduates, 55.2% of the sample possess business related bachelor degrees. While 12.4% have social science degrees, the rest of the respondents have natural science and degrees from other disciplines, which account for 32.4% (see table 6). Generally speaking, this would imply that business-related and social science

bachelor degrees would serve as an acceptable requirement for supervisory/managerial and human resource positions by large multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector.

Table 4 : Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age	Number	Percent
30 Years and below	27	18.7
Between 31- 35 Years	52	35.8
Between 36 – 40 Years	39	26.8
Between 41 – 45 Years	19	13.1
46 Years and over	8	5.6
Total	145	100

Table 5 : Education Background Distribution of the Respondents

Level of Education	Number	Percent
High School	7	4.8
Associate Diploma	13	9.0
Undergraduate	59	40.7
Postgraduate	66	45.5
Total	145	100

Table 6 : Education Specialization Distribution of the Respondents

Area of Graduate	Number	Percent
Business Related Degree	80	55.2
Social Science Degree	18	12.4
Other	47	32.4
<i>Total</i>	145	100

Interestingly, 39.7% of the respondents have master's degrees from overseas tertiary institutes as this simply reflected the importance of English language skills in large multi-national organizations in the Thai private sectors and the influence of Western management styles and cultures during the past

10 years in Thailand, particularly during the economic boom period (from 1988 to 1996) up to the present time.

In addition, information from the questionnaires revealed that 82.4% of those that earned master's degrees graduated from business related schools from overseas advanced degree colleges or universities. This would indicate the need of many multi-organizations in the Thai private sectors before the economic crisis in mid 1997 to recruit and select supervisory and managerial employees or human resource specialists with higher business degrees, especially with a master's in business administration. Information from the completed questionnaires indicated that the majority of employees are not newly hired as they have been working with their current employers for several years; 47.6% of the respondents have more than five years of work experience with their companies, and 24.1% are in between two to five years, and 28.3% have less than two years of work experience (See Table 7).

Table 7 : Years of Service with Present Employers

Years	Number	Percent
< 2 Years	41	28.3
> 2 Years but < 5 Years	35	24.1
> 5 Years	69	47.6
Total	145	100

Table 8 : Total Years of Work Experience

Years	Number	Percent
< 5 Years	29	20.0
> 5 Years but < 10 Years	47	32.4
> 10 Years but < 15 Years	38	26.2
> 15 Years	31	21.4
Total	145	100

Respondents tend to possess extensive years of work experience, as results of the survey indicated that 47.6% have worked full time for pay for more than 10 years since graduation (from latest formal education), while 32.4% are in between 5 to 10 years of total work experience and only 20.0% have less than 5 years of total experience (see table 8). This would confirm our understanding of and perception about social value and cultural belief in the Thai context; that the notions of professionalism and seniority at work, as well as the level of academic and career advancement, are indispensable for managerial and senior human resource positions among multi-national organizations in the private sector.

By and large, we can identify the respondents as three groups of employees based on their current positions and job responsibility. In terms of the distribution of position classification level, the majority of the respondents (66.9%) are in the middle-level management group (supervisory & managerial level), 11.0% are in the high-level management group and 22.1% are at the non-managerial level (see table 9).

Table 9 : Position Classification Level

Position	Number	Percent
Senior Management Executives	16	11.0
Supervisory & Managerial Level	97	66.9
Non Managerial Level	32	22.1
Total	145	100

In terms of their employing business divisions or departments, 44.1% of employees are working in sales and marketing departments, 33.1% are responsible for human resource management and development functions and 22.8% are in support or back office areas (see table 10).

Table 10 : Employing Department Distribution of the Respondents

Division/Department	Number	Percent
Sales & Marketing	64	44.1
Human Resource Management	48	33.1
Finance & Administration	33	22.8
Total	145	100

Description of the Sampled Organizations

Concerning organizational structure and size, the majority of organizations are medium sized, as only 21.4% have more than 1,000 total employees. 46.9% have from 201 to 1,000 employees and 31.7% have fewer than 200 employees (see table 11). However, the size of the human resource departments within these selected groups of companies does not vary according to total organization size. The human resource functions within multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector tend to be managed by smaller groups of human resource specialists (fewer than 10 human resource staff members) and often are regarded as a supporting or value adding function of the business. Regardless of the size of the sampled organizations, only 10.3% of the organizations employed more than 20 people in human resource departments, 13.8% between 11 and 20 human resource personnel and 75.9% have fewer than 10 people in the department (see table 12).

Table 11 : Organizational Size

Organizational Size	Number	Percent
< 200 Employees	46	31.7
> 200 Employees but < 1,000 Employees	68	46.9
> 1,000 Employees	31	21.4
Total	145	100

Table 12 : Size of Human Resource Department

Human Resource Personnel	Number	Percent
< 10 Employees	110	75.9
> 10 Employees but < 20 Employees	20	13.8
> 20 Employees	15	10.3
Total	145	100

With increasing business globalization, partnerships and alliances between and among multi-national organizations with local Thai business entrepreneurs are becoming popular in the 21st century, shifting boundaries which could simply be removed through globalized economics, technologies and communications. Local independent and isolated business organizations are finding themselves in a very difficult market position in terms of growing their business strategically and profitably. As a consequence, international partnerships are current standard business practice as product life cycles shorten and immediate distribution becomes imperative (Albrecht, Pagano and Phoocharoon, 1997: 1-4). All 30 organizations in the sample are in some ways currently engaged in some form of international partnerships with multi-national firms. Concerning the nationality of the ownership of the sampled organizations, the surveys indicated that the majority of the respondents described their employing organizations as being owned and managed by Thai business partners (36.6%), 20.0% owned and managed by American corporations, 4.8% by British, 5.5% by the Australian, 4.8% by the French, 9.0% by the Japanese and 19.3% by other nationalities (see table 13).

Table 13 : Nationality of Ownership of Employing Organization

Nationality	Number	Percent
American	29	20.0
British	7	4.8
Australian	8	5.5
French	7	4.8
Japanese	13	9.0
Thai	53	36.6
Other	28	19.3
Total	145	100

Current Practices Regarding Recruitment and Selection

This section deals with the methods generally employed to assess external applicants for managerial positions in multi-national organizations. Table 14 presents the categorization of the respondents into two major groups; **“Not Use Regularly”** (0-50%), which includes those who ‘Never Use’, ‘Rarely Use’ and ‘Sometimes Use’ the recruitment and selection procedures, and **“Use Regularly”** (75%-100%), which combines the categories of ‘Usually Use’ and ‘Always Use’. It can be seen that 73.8% of the respondents ‘usually’ and ‘always’ require written applications for managerial positions, and 75.9% require pre-employment medical checks. The results showed that 58.6% require a panel of two and more interviewers, and 76.6% require more than one interview. It appears that interviews are still the most frequently-used recruitment and selection tool, closely followed by written applications and pre-employment medical checks.

Table 14 : Percentage of Typical Usage of Selection Procedures

Procedure	Frequency of Not	Frequency of Use
	Regularly Use	Regularly
More than one interview	23.4	76.6
Pre-employment medical check	24.1	75.9
Written application	26.2	73.8
More than one interviewer	41.4	58.6
Partially structured interview	42.8	57.2
"Walk In" candidates	44.8	55.2
Advertisements	51.7	48.3
Highly structured interview	55.2	44.8
English proficiency test	56.6	43.4
Recommendation/ mployee referrals	57.9	42.1
Reference check/supervisor's report	69.7	30.3
Psychological test	74.5	25.5
Intelligence test	79.3	20.7
Assessment centers	83.4	16.6
Educational institutions	83.4	16.6
External recruitment consultants	84.8	15.2

Although the panel discussion interview is fairly well used among multi-national organizations, the format of the interviewing process for managerial employees appears to be partially structured, as 57.2% of the respondents use partially structured interviews and 44.8% use highly structured interviews. There seems to be an increase in the requirement for partially structured interviews because it would be logical to argue that the use of highly structured interviews would limit the discretion of interviewers, particularly for Thai management executives within multi-national firms in the Thai private sector in terms of varying questions and procedures as they wish during the interviewing and selection process. Surprisingly there seems to be a decrease in the requirement for reference checking or use of previous supervisor's reports for managerial positions as the survey result indicated that

only 30.3% require reference checking. The decline in the use of reference checks or supervisory reports is consistent with the argument set forth by Stephen P. Robbins in his new book on human resource management, ***The Truth About Managing People and Nothing but the Truth***. Robbins argues that references from past employers tend to be valuable in the hiring process but they in reality have become increasingly difficult to acquire. On the other hand, personal references are easier to acquire but are essentially worthless. In addition, previous employers are more likely not to describe the behavior and characteristics of the candidates in a negative manner. Therefore, information obtained from reference checks or supervisory reports, which are usually positive, become of little importance in the recruitment and selection process (Robbins, 2002: 18-21).

The results show that respondents are less likely to rely on psychological procedures for this level of vacancy, and assessment centers are still of little use in Thailand as only 25.5% of the respondents use psychological testing. 20.7% use intelligence tests and only 16.6% use assessment centers. About 43.4% of the respondents use English proficiency tests to assess the selection of managerial employees and this is consistent with the fact that English proficiency is more likely to be perceived as a prerequisite attribute for managerial and human resource positions in multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector. Multi-national organizations in Thailand are more likely to welcome and consider "Walk In" candidates and rely considerably on the use of recruitment advertising and recommendations or referrals from current employees for managerial positions, as this is supported by the fact that 55.2% accepted "Walk In" candidates. 48.3% of the respondents use advertisements, and 42.1% use recommendations or employee referrals. However, the results show that respondents are less likely to rely on the use of external recruitment consultants or head hunters (15.2%), as this is more likely to be quite popular for top management executive positions amongst large multi-national organizations in Thailand. By the same token, only 16.6% of the respondents indicated the use of educational and graduate institutions, as this is most likely to

Table 15 : Percentage of Typical Usage of Selection Procedures by Organizational Size

Procedure	Small	Medium	Large	Total
	No (%)	No (%)	No (%)	No (%)
Written application	34 (79.3)	51 (75.0)	22 (71.0)	107 (73.8)
Pre-employment medical check	29 (63.0)	56 (82.4)	25 (80.6)	110 (75.9)
More than one interviewer	26 (56.5)	37 (54.4)	22 (71.0)	85 (58.6)
More than one interview	37 (80.4)	56 (82.4)	18 (58.1)	111 (76.6)
Highly structured interview	20 (43.5)	27 (39.7)	18 (58.1)	65 (44.8)
Partially structured interview	27 (58.7)	33 (48.5)	23 (74.2)	83 (57.2)
Psychological test	10 (21.7)	18 (26.5)	9 (29.0)	37 (25.5)
Intelligence test	8 (17.4)	12 (17.6)	10 (32.3)	30 (20.7)
Assessment centers	9 (19.6)	7 (10.3)	8 (25.8)	24 (16.6)
English proficiency test	19 (41.3)	28 (41.2)	16 (51.6)	63 (43.4)
Reference check/supervisor's report	14 (30.4)	20 (29.4)	10 (32.3)	44 (30.3)
Advertisements	16 (34.8)	29 (42.6)	25 (80.6)	70 (48.3)
"Walk In" Candidates	18 (39.1)	40 (58.8)	22 (71.0)	80 (55.2)
Recommendation/employee referrals	23 (50.0)	26 (38.2)	12 (38.7)	61 (42.1)
Educational Institutions	5 (10.9)	8 (11.8)	11 (35.5)	24 (16.6)
External recruitment consultants	5 (10.9)	8 (11.8)	9 (29.0)	22 (15.2)
Total	46 (31.7)	68 (46.9)	31 (21.4)	145 (100)

Table 16 : Percentage of Typical Usage of Selection Procedures by Size of Human Resource Department

Procedure	Small	Medium	Large	Total
	No (%)	No (%)	No (%)	No (%)
Written application	79 (71.8)	16 (80.0)	12 (80.0)	107 (73.8)
Pre-employment medical check	82 (74.5)	16 (80.0)	12 (80.0)	110 (75.9)
More than one interviewer	62 (56.4)	12 (60.0)	11 (73.3)	85 (58.6)
More than one interview	86 (78.2)	17 (85.0)	8 (53.3)	111 (76.6)
Highly structured interview	49 (44.5)	8 (40.0)	8 (53.3)	65 (44.8)
Partially structure interview	64 (58.2)	11 (55.0)	8 (53.3)	83 (57.2)
Psychological test	29 (26.4)	4 (20.0)	4 (26.7)	37 (25.5)
Intelligence test	21 (19.1)	5 (25.0)	4 (26.7)	30 (20.7)
Assessment centers	18 (16.4)	5 (25.0)	1 (6.7)	24 (16.6)
English proficiency test	46 (41.8)	12 (60.0)	5 (33.3)	63 (43.4)
Reference check/supervisor's report	2 (29.1)	9 (45.0)	3 (20.0)	44 (30.3)
Advertisements	47 (42.7)	14 (70.0)	9 (60.0)	70 (48.3)
"Walk In" Candidates	56 (50.9)	16 (80.0)	8 (53.3)	80 (55.2)
Recommendation/employee referrals	46 (41.8)	9 (45.0)	6 (40.0)	61 (42.1)
Educational Institutions	13 (11.8)	7 (35.0)	4 (26.7)	24 (16.6)
External recruitment consultants	14 (12.7)	5 (25.0)	3 (20.0)	22 (15.2)
Total	110 (75.9)	20 (13.8)	15 (10.3)	145 (100)

Table 17 : Percentage of Typical Usage of Selection Procedures by Nationality of Ownership of Employing Organization

Procedure	American	British	Australian	French	Japanese	Thai	Other	Total
Written application	21 (72.4)	6 (85.7)	4 (50.0)	5 (71.4)	10 (76.9)	35 (66.0)	26 (92.9)	107 (73.8)
Pre-employment medical check	20 (69.0)	6 (85.7)	6 (62.5)	6 (85.7)	12 (92.3)	43 (81.1)	18 (64.3)	110 (75.9)
More than one interviewer	16 (55.2)	4 (57.1)	4 (50.0)	5 (71.4)	7 (53.8)	32 (60.4)	22 (71.0)	85 (58.6)
More than one interview	23 (79.3)	3 (42.9)	7 (87.5)	7 (100)	7 (53.8)	40 (75.5)	24 (85.7)	111 (76.6)
Highly structured interview	9 (31.0)	4 (57.1)	4 (50.0)	3 (42.9)	4 (30.8)	27 (50.9)	14 (50.0)	65 (44.8)
Partially structure interview	16 (55.2)	6 (85.7)	3 (37.5)	5 (71.4)	3 (23.1)	39 (73.6)	11 (39.3)	83 (57.2)
Psychological test	8 (27.6)	1 (14.3)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	2 (15.4)	14 (26.4)	11 (39.3)	37 (25.5)
Intelligence test	4 (13.8)	0 (0)	4 (50.0)	0 (0)	1 (7.7)	11 (20.8)	10 (35.7)	30 (20.7)
Assessment centers	3 (10.3)	1 (14.3)	2 (25.0)	0 (0)	1 (7.7)	14 (26.4)	3 (10.7)	24 (16.6)
English proficiency test	12 (41.4)	4 (57.1)	4 (50.0)	3 (42.9)	4 (30.8)	17 (32.1)	19 (67.9)	63 (43.4)
Reference check / supervisor's report	10 (34.5)	4 (57.1)	2 (25.0)	1 (14.3)	2 (15.4)	16 (30.2)	9 (32.1)	44 (30.3)
Advertisements	10 (34.5)	1 (14.3)	6 (75.0)	2 (28.6)	7 (53.8)	27 (50.9)	17 (60.7)	70 (48.3)
"Walk In" Candidates	14 (48.3)	3 (42.9)	3 (37.5)	3 (42.9)	9 (69.2)	33 (62.3)	15 (53.6)	80 (55.2)
Recommendation / employee referrals	10 (34.5)	2 (28.6)	3 (37.5)	5 (71.4)	6 (46.2)	25 (47.2)	10 (35.7)	61 (42.1)
Educational Institutions	5 (17.2)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	2 (15.4)	11 (20.8)	5 (17.9)	24 (16.6)
External recruitment consultants	9 (31.0)	1 (14.3)	1 (12.5)	1 (14.3)	1 (7.7)	5 (9.4)	4 (14.3)	22 (15.2)
Total	29 (20.0)	7 (46.8)	8 (5.5)	7 (4.8)	13 (9.0)	53 (36.6)	28 (19.3)	145 (100)

be the method used to assess external applicants for young and new lower-level managerial positions with fewer years of work experience in multi-national organizations.

In this section, multi-national organizations in Thai private sectors will be classified into three major categories: a small size company with fewer than 200 permanent employees, a medium-sized company with between 201 and 1,000 permanent employees, and a large multi-national company with over 1,000 permanent employees (see table 15). It can be seen from the table that written applications constitute primarily prerequisite information for assessing managerial positions in multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector regardless of the size of the organization. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the need for pre-employment medical checks among the three organizational sizes.

Although, interviews can be described as a common recruitment and selection tool for assessing managerial employees in Thailand, larger organizations tend to favor panel and structured (both partially and highly structured) interviews. This could perhaps be explained by the fact that panel interviews tend to provide larger organizations with several significant advantages over traditional one-to-one interviews, including higher validity because of multiple inputs, better acceptance of the decision, and faster decision making. While structured interviews tend to provide a more consistent basis for evaluating managerial candidates and are more likely to provide the type of information needed for making sound decisions, larger organizations are less likely to conduct more than one interview with managerial applications compared with small and medium-sized organizations. It is interesting to consider that despite having a very low validity coefficient (Ulrich and Trumbo, 1965; Arvey and Campion, 1982; Cook, 1993), interviews can be described as a common recruitment and selection tool for assessing managerial employees (Lewis, 1984; Robertson and Makin, 1986). This selection technique has over the past 20 years gained popularity among Thai private business organizations. The use of interviews alone, however, has some problems as interview impressions

are acknowledged by most researchers and business practitioners as extremely susceptible to error because of the interviewer's personal, often unconscious, values and prejudices. Much research conducted, including Avery, R, and Champion, J. in 1982, Anderson, N. and Shackleton, V, in 1986 and, Harris, M, M, in 1989, indicate that these interviews can differ from one interviewer to the next and found little consistency when comparing interviewers' separate assessments of the same person. To minimize such inconsistency, two commonly recommended ways of countering interviewer bias among Thai private business organizations include substituting single interviewers with panels of interviews and structuring interviews so that variations between them can be largely reduced.

Psychological and intelligence tests, assessment centers and reference checking or the use of previous supervisor's reports for managerial positions are less commonly used within multi-national organizations in the Thai private sectors, as the table confirms that there seems to be no major difference between different organizational sizes. Large multi-national organizations in the Thai private sector are more likely to welcome and consider "Walk In" candidates (71.0%) and rely heavily on the use of recruitment advertising (80.6%) for managerial positions than are medium sized organizations (58.8% for "Walk In" candidates and 42.6% for use of recruitment advertising, respectively) and small organizations (39.1% for "Walk In" candidates and 34.8% for use of recruitment advertising, respectively). This somewhat contrasts the use of recommendations or employee referrals for managerial positions. Small organizations (50.0%) tend to favor this method over medium-sized and large multi-national organizations in the private sector (38.2% and 38.7%, respectively). Organizations in general are less likely to use educational institutions or external recruitment consultants for managerial positions. However, there seems to be little difference between organizational sizes. Large organizations tend to favor more of these two sources of recruitment than small and medium-sized organizations.

Conclusion

In this concluding section, the main points of the research findings obtained from a survey of 30 Bangkok based organizations in the private sector through the use of structured questionnaires will be summarized. This descriptive and quantitative analysis helps describe the attitudes and beliefs of Thai human resource specialists and managerial employees, as well as the current practices and systems of management selection, in Thai private business organizations. There seems to be a decrease in the requirement for reference checking or use of previous supervisors' reports for managerial positions. The results also show that respondents are less likely to rely on psychological procedures for this level of vacancy, and assessment centers are still of little use in Thailand. Although some of the larger multi-national organizations are moving towards increased reliance on the psychological tests, intelligence tests and the assessment center, the trend is still too small to be indicative of future practice in Thailand. Our research findings on the use of interviews as a strategic tool for management recruitment and selection are consistent with the advice that has persistently issued from management journals and research based texts in that larger organizations tend to favor panel and structured (both partially and highly structured) interviews. This could perhaps be explained by the fact that panel interviews tend to provide larger organizations with several significant advantages over traditional one-to-one interviews, including higher validity because of multiple inputs, better acceptance of the decision, and faster decision time. Structured interviews, on the other hand, tend to provide a more consistent basis for evaluating managerial candidates and are more likely to provide the type of information needed for making sound decisions. On the other hand, larger organizations are less likely to conduct more than one interview with managerial applicants compared to small and medium-sized organizations.

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